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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 559

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mr. Felix Z. Wilson II of Nashville.

WHEREAS, it was with deep sadness and a great sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly and the citizens of Tennessee learned of the passing of Mr. Felix Z. Wilson II, who had served with distinction as Davidson's County Register of Deds for 36 remarkable years; and

WHEREAS, Felix Wilson was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, he gave unreservedly of himself, his time and his talents for the greater good of his family and friends, his profession and the Nashville community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson was a highly respected member of Davidson County government, a voice of integrity in public office and a pillar of the Nashville community; and

WHEREAS, born and raised in Nashville, Felix Wilson attended Cathedral School and graduated from Father Ryan High School; and

WHEREAS, after working at the Vultee factory making airplane wings, Felix Wilson answered his patriotic call to duty during World War II as a volunteer in the U.S. Army Air Corps; and

WHEREAS, after leaving the military, Mr. Wilson began working in the hardware business with his father-in-law, Houston Williams; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 25, Felix Wilson answered his true calling by following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather in the world of politics; and

WHEREAS, his first foray into the political arena occurred in 1947 with his election to the Nashville City Council; he served two four-year terms from 1947-1955; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson began his long, estimable tenure in the Davidson County Register of Deeds office in 1950 as Chief Deputy under his father, James Wilson, who preceded him as Register of Deeds and taught his son firsthand the duties and responsibilities required of him in this important public office; and

WHEREAS, Felix Wilson succeeded his father in 1962 when he was elected as Register of Deeds for his first term; he served eight more terms before retiring in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Felix Wilson served with acumen and alacrity as Davidson County Register of Deeds for 36 years, in which position he earned the respect of his peers and constituents alike for the superior quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, throughout his excellent tenure, Mr. Wilson adhered to the common sense approach and displayed the common touch in all endeavors, working well with old and young alike; and

WHEREAS, a genuine "people person," Felix Wilson lived by the philosophy that "efficiency saves money and courtesy costs nothing" and humbly credited his unparalleled success to never forgetting that his office was a public trust with the people to serve the people to the best of his ability; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson took great pride in the fact that he never had an extensive political organization, but was able to be re-elected so many times with primarily the support of his friends; and

WHEREAS, Felix Wilson was proud to be part of a family with almost 100 years of public service, starting with his great-great-grandfather, Felix Kirk Zollicoffer, who was the editor of Nashville's Whig newspaper, the forerunner to the *Nashville Banner*, and served three terms in the U.S. Congress before being the first Confederate general killed in the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, his grandfather, the first Felix Z. Wilson, rendered praiseworthy service as Davidson County Trustee, a Nashville City Council member and as Mayor of Nashville before being elected Register of Deeds in 1946; and

WHEREAS, Felix Wilson's dedication to public service went beyond his office to meritorious service in various civic and professional organizations; he has served as the distinguished president and was a charter member of the Tennessee County Officials Association and a past president of the Tennessee Registers Association, in addition to rendering astute service on the board of the International Association of Clerks, Records, Registers and Election Officials which he helped to found; and

WHEREAS, a gifted leader, he also demonstrated his many talents as chairman of the Legislative Committees for the Registers Association and the County Officials Association; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson had been an active and devout member of the St. Henry Parish since its beginning; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Felix Wilson enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife of 54 years, Juanita W. Wilson; he was the proud parent of three daughters, Bonnie Joss of Dundee, Illinois; and Becky Rose and Bobbi Jeanne Nealy of Nashville; and a son, Felix Z. Wilson III of Knoxville; he also took great pride and joy in his 12 grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, despite his many accomplishments, Mr. Wilson modestly cited his greatest achievement in life as, "The close relationship I had with my God, wife, children and family. Also, through my life in public office, I was given the opportunity to help and have so many wonderful friends"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is rare when a person of Felix Wilson's stature walks among us; he evidenced his brilliance as a public servant, while he worked diligently to improve the quality of life for the good people of Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Mr. Felix Z. Wilson II and recognize his meritorious service to the good people of Davidson County, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our deepest sympathy and offer our sincere condolences to the family of Felix Wilson.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.